

REMARKS

Claims 8-10 are pending in the present application. Claim 8 is the sole independent claim.

The withdrawal of all previous rejections is appreciated.

Claims 8-10 are presented to the Examiner for further prosecution on the merits.

A. Asserted Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In the outstanding Office Action Made Final mailed June 15, 2003, the Examiner rejected claims 8-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,898,178 to Bunker ("the Bunker reference"). This rejection is respectfully traversed for at least the reasons set forth below.

The Examiner relies on general indications in the Bunker reference for the need to maintain ion implantation systems and the conventional use of inert gas to equalize pressure or vacuum pump these systems when opening and closing these systems. It is respectfully submitted that, at most, rather than teaching the invention set forth in claim 8, this merely teaches admitted prior art of FIG. 2 in the instant application.

In particular, while the background of the Bunker reference may teach using inert gas to control pressure when opening and closing the system for maintenance, there is no disclosure or suggestion to inject inert gas into the system *before* evacuation thereof, as recited in claim 8. The detailed description of the Bunker reference is directed to using sealable enclosures for maintenance of ion implantation systems, to eliminate the need for opening and closing these systems for maintenance.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the Bunker reference fails to disclose or suggest the present invention as recited in claim 8. The remaining rejected claims depend from

claim 8 and are similarly believed to be allowable. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

B. Conclusion

Since the prior art references neither anticipate nor render obvious the subject invention as presently claimed, applicants respectfully submit that claims 8-10 are now in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

The remaining documents cited by the Examiner were not relied on to reject the claims. Therefore, no comments concerning these documents are considered necessary at this time.


If the Examiner believes that additional discussions or information might advance the prosecution of the instant application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below to expedite resolution of any outstanding issues.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration of this application is earnestly solicited, and an early and favorable further action upon all pending claims is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

LEE & STERBA, P.C.

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PETITION and
DEPOSIT ACCOUNT CHARGE AUTHORIZATION

This document and any concurrently filed papers are believed to be timely. Should any extension of the term be required, applicant hereby petitions the Director for such extension and requests that any applicable petition fee be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.

If fee payment is enclosed, this amount is believed to be correct. However, the Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.

Any additional fee(s) necessary to effect the proper and timely filing of the accompanying-papers may also be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.